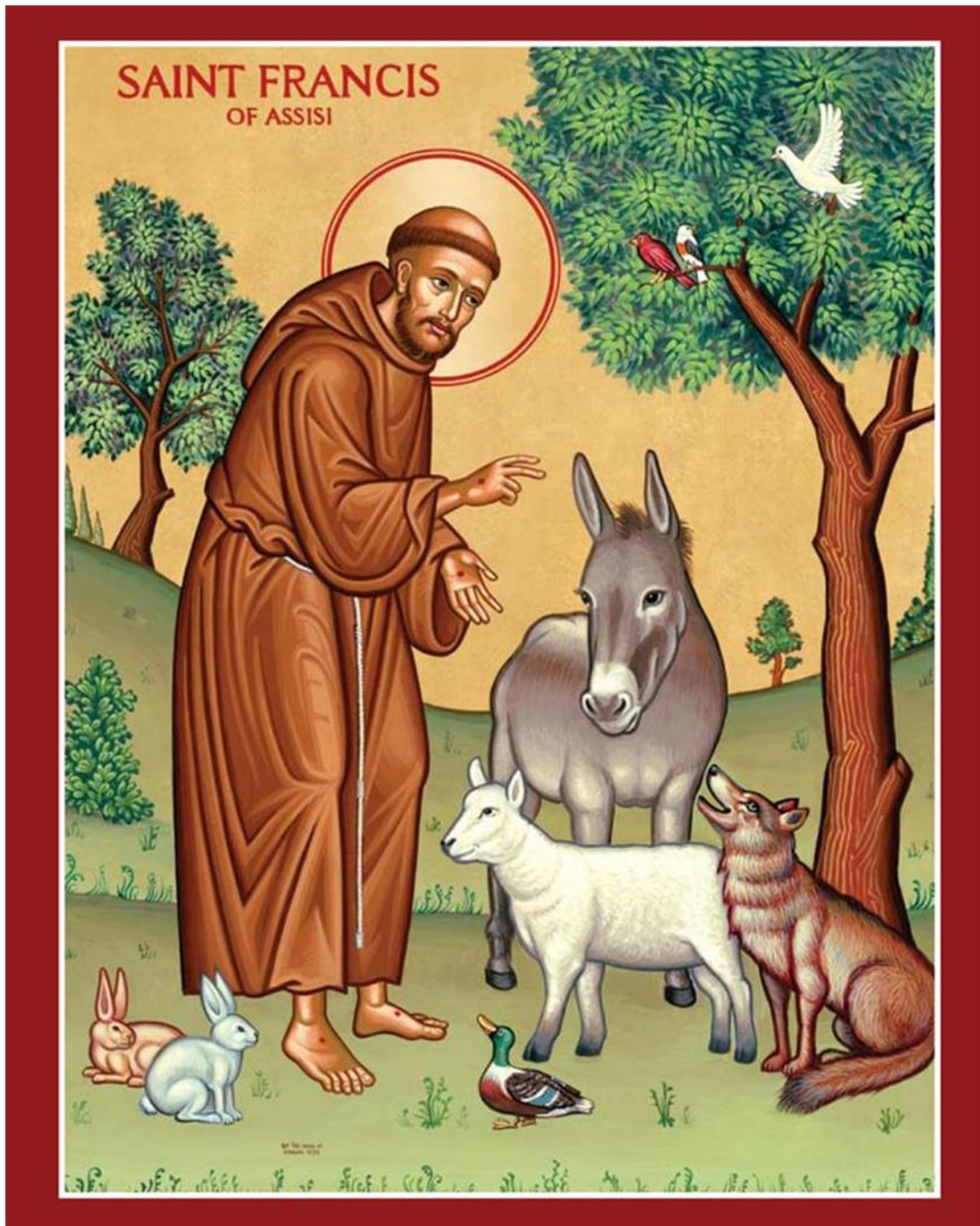


Church of the Covenant

Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ



Sunday Worship
November 17, 2024
Blessing of the Animals



Church of the Covenant
Sunday Worship
Blessing of the Animals

November 17, 2024, 10:30 am [Zoom Link](#)

Welcome and thank you for worshipping together for this “hybrid” service where some will be in the sanctuary at 67 Newbury Street, and some in the sanctuary of places far and near. For those joining online, we begin on Zoom at the link above. Please keep your mic muted during the service.

**You are invited to rise in body or spirit.*

Prelude

Allegro from Organ Concerto in F
“The Cuckoo and the Nightingale”

G. F. Handel
arr. M. Dupré

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

*** Call to Worship**

based on excerpts from Psalm 96

One: O sing to God a new song; sing to God, all the earth!

Many: **Sing to God; bless God’s name;
tell of God’s salvation from day to day.**

One: Say among the people, God reigns!

Many: **Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice!**

One: Let the sea roar and all that fills it;

Many: **Let fields and everything in them give praise;**

One: The trees of the forest will sing for joy

Many: **because God comes with righteous judgment and truth.**

*** Kindling the Christ Light**

One: The light of Christ

Many: **Thanks be to God!**

* Opening Hymn

Canticle of the Three Children

Verse 1: Christine James

Verse 2: Barbara Darling

Verse 3: Karen Henry

Tune: Gustav Holst



Praise God, all works of heav - en, all beasts both wild and tame. Clear skies or rains from
The moon in all its splen-dor, the sun - rise light sub-lime, the birch-es stand-ing
All Chil-dren who are hap - py and those with-out a home who long for love and



heav - en, all man - i - fest God's reign! Star-ry night and dew-y morn-ing sum-mer
slen - dor, the hol - ly-hocks that climb. Bright light - ning as it's pop - ping, loud_
safe - ty, God will not leave a - lone. We the stew - ards of this life__ Each__



breeze and wint - er chill. The__ dolph-in's leap, hawks soar - ing, each
thun - der as it roars, small__ bun - nies hap - ply hop - ping, Gir -
called by God by name join with earth and oc - eans bright__ to



shows God's lov - ing will.
affes and lab - ra - dors. We__ pledge our love and lab - ors to build a world of
sing our joy - ful praise.



peace, for our kin and for our neigh-bors God's wond-ers nev - er cease!

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Many: Loving Creator of all animals, when you made humans, you called us to be companions and caregivers to one another and to all your creatures. Too often we fail to love as you love us. On earth there is enough, yet we continue in injustice and scarcity. We are silent in the face of violence and cruelty. Our systems of domination and greed kill animals, plants, rivers, mountains, oceans, sky. We aren't living out the promise of the Beloved Community. Sometimes we even forget to imagine that it's possible. Holy One, forgive us, reconcile us, re-create us.

One: Let us now listen to God in silent prayer...

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: From the very beginning, God has created the whole universe in love. God created the sun and moon and stars, and made this living planet our home. God brings forth every plant and insect, every bird and fish, the tiniest protozoa, and the majestic whales. Even when we feel like strangers to God and one another, nature remembers us and sees the divine light in our hearts. Therefore, as critters ourselves, as children of God, called to stewardship, solidarity, and co-creating in love, let us celebrate together:

Many: **In Jesus Christ we are set free and made whole. Alleluia! Amen.**

* Sung Response

Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises

Refrain

Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your prais - es, all our hearts are filled with glad - ness. Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your prais - es, all our hearts are filled with glad - ness.

The image shows a musical score for a song. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 7/8. The first system is labeled 'Refrain'. The lyrics are: 'Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your prais - es, all our hearts are filled with glad - ness. Hal - le - lu - jah! We sing your prais - es, all our hearts are filled with glad - ness.' The music features a mix of eighth and quarter notes, with some rests. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and single notes.

Scripture Readings

Hebrew Bible Reading – Genesis 1:24-2:3

And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind and the cattle of every kind and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let Us make humans in Our image, according to Our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over the cattle and over all the wild animals of the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

So God created humans in Her image, in the image of God They created them; male and female He created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and increase and replenish the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the air and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. God saw everything that God had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all their multitude. On the sixth day God finished the work that They had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all the work that She had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that God had done in creation.

One: God is still speaking, the word of God,
Many: **Thanks be to God.**

Sung Response

Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises

Reflection

Moment for Generosity

Call to Offering

Online Giving Option: www.cotcbos.org/give
Click on Give Now, then choose Pledges or Gifts-General.

Offertory

All God's Critters

Bill Staines

*** Communion Doxology**

Tune: *Old Hundredth*

Though what we have in truth is small,
God's grace shall be enough for all.
So as we bless and break this bread,
Each heart be filled, each mouth be fed.

*** Prayer of Dedication**

Blessing of the Animals

Celebrations & Concerns

One: God, in your grace,
Many: Receive our prayer.

Pastoral Prayer

Celebration of Holy Communion

* Invitation

* Communion Hymn

I'm Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table

I'm gonna eat at the welcome table,
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table, some of these days.
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table,
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table, some of these days.

* The Great Thanksgiving

One: May God be with you!

Many: **And also with you.**

One: People of Covenant, let us lift up our hearts!

Many: **We open our hearts to the Spirit who fills us with hope.**

One: Let us give thanks to God our light.

Many: **It is right for us to offer our thanks and praise to God.**

One: It is right for us to thank and praise you God...

...And so, with your people here on earth, with all the ancestors,
and all the saints and the great company of heaven and earth, we
glorify your name, praising you together:

Many: **Holy, holy, holy One, God of heaven and earth.**

**All creation is full of your love and grace. Hosanna in the
highest! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of peace.
Hosanna in the highest!**

One: Holy are you, O God...

*** The Prayer of Jesus**

(in unison)

Our God in heaven, holy is your name. Your reign come; your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil, for yours are the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Post Communion Prayer

*** Closing Hymn NCH (black) 425**

For the Fruit of All Creation

For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.
For God's gifts to every nation, thanks be to God.
For the plowing, sowing, reaping, silent growth while we are sleeping,
Future needs in earth's safe-keeping, thanks be to God.

In the just reward of labor, God's will is done.
In the help we give our neighbor, God's will is done.
In our worldwide task of caring for the hungry and despairing,
In the harvests we are sharing, God's will is done.

For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us, for the truths that still confound us,
Most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

*** Charge & Benediction**

*** Exchange of the Peace**

(Please exchange greetings of Christ's peace and reconciliation)

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

Worship Participants

Worship Leaders – Rev. Kate Carlisle, Rev. Rob Mark, Rev. Joshua Lawrence Lazard, Barbara Darling, Evelyn Kimber, Christine James, Margy Ronna, Nancy Stockford

Minister of Music – Tom Handel

Moment for Generosity – Barbara Darling

Covenant Choir

Ushers – Anne Crane, Denice Thornhill

Communion Servers – Barbara Darling, Harry Forsdick

Digital Minister – Christine James

Audio Visual Tech Team – Venkatesh Balasubramanian, Jon Schwarz

Sunday Sexton – Syd Smith

WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE COVENANT! We are so glad to have you worshipping with us today! If you are new to our community, we hope you will feel at home and welcomed during this service. If you have any questions about who we are as a community of faith, please reach out to an usher in person or our Digital Minister in the chat.

NEW TO COTC? We are so glad you are here! Let us know a little bit about how we can welcome you by filling out the form at this QR code, and learn more on our website at cotcbos.org.



WELCOME CHILDREN & YOUTH!! Welcome to all children, youth, and families—those we know already and those who are here for the first time. We offer Christian education through Godly Play for ages 3-9, youth classes for ages 10-13 and 14+, and a nursery for the littlest ones. If you need help finding us, please ask an usher. We share CYCE info regularly via email, so please email Rev. Kate at kate.carlisle@cotcbos.org if you want to receive updates.

LIFE ALIVE BRUNCH TODAY! Join the 20s-30s-40s group for brunch after worship today. See Rev. Joshua if you have any questions.

ZOOM WITH NICARAGUAN SIBLINGS ON NOVEMBER 20! On Wednesday, November 20, from 4:00 to 6:00 pm, all are invited to participate in a Zoom formation with members of our sibling community in Nicaragua. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Diane (dianelauber@comcast.net).

UPCOMING WORSHIP. Please join us each Sunday at 10:30 am and during the special services listed below as we come together in community to pray, sing, share celebrations and concerns, and hear God's still-speaking Word proclaimed in these hybrid services (in-person and Zoom options). [Zoom Link for each service.](#)

- Sunday, November 24: Rev. Rob Mark preaching, Gratitude/Reign of Christ Sunday, All-Church Book Discussion After Worship
- Sunday, December 1: First Sunday in Advent, Rev. Joshua Lawrence Lazard preaching, Holy Communion, Malawi Adult Ed. After Worship

NEXT ALL-CHURCH READ NEXT WEEK! The Climate Jubilee Team invites you to join a discussion of the book *Jesus for Farmers and Fishers: Justice for All Those Marginalized by Our Food System* by Gary Paul Nabhan, after worship on **Sunday, November 24.** The author offers an imaginative look at the parables of Jesus to bring us into a heart of compassion for those in the food economy hit by the climate crisis. "Jesus used the fields and lakes as a stage to encourage acts of kindness and restorative justice, and inspire resilience and hope in the face of hardship." Look for the book at the library or order it online.

BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAYS. Our weekly Bible Study meets on Wednesday mornings at 9:45 on Zoom. We are studying the book of Acts, exploring the movement of the Christian community throughout the Jewish, Greek, and Roman worlds. If you would like more information or want to be on the list to get regular reminders and Zoom details, contact Jack Ammerman at jwacooks@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAY EVENING PRAYERS 6:00-6:30 pm. Join us for our weekly Wednesday evening prayers with intentional liturgy, contemplative song, psalms, and sharing of prayers with our siblings from Newton Presbyterian [on Zoom](#) (link on <http://www.cotcbos.org>).

VIDEO CAMERAS/POSTING FULL SERVICE RECORDINGS. To best serve our diverse community and new worshippers, we livestream and record each service, including Celebrations & Concerns. If you would prefer not to be in occasional camera shots, you are welcome to sit on the outside aisles on either side of the sanctuary. Recordings of each service are available on our [Worship Recordings Page](#) (cotcbos.org/worship-recordings).

WEEKLY CALENDAR. Click [here](http://cotcbos.org/calendar-of-events) (cotcbos.org/calendar-of-events) to view the weekly calendar of events.

Visitor or Newcomer? Welcome to Church of the Covenant!

We are glad you are here. Please let us know if there are ways we can help you connect to the church community. Learn more about the church by visiting our website at www.cotcbos.org. To sign up for email updates about worship services and other events in our community, please fill out a visitor's card in your pew, or email us at info@cotcbos.org.

Parking Bargain – Worshippers may park at the Back Bay Garage [Clarendon Street, between Boylston and St. James] on Sundays between 6:00 am and 9:00 pm for the first three (3) hours for only \$5. To get this discounted rate, please ask an usher before or after the worship service for a parking discount voucher.

Prayers of Celebration or Concern May Be Shared in the Red Book – At the rear of the Sanctuary is a red book where prayers that you wish to have spoken aloud during the Pastoral Prayer time may be written. The book will be available until the time of the offering.

Time of Greeting – After worship this morning, we hope that you will take a few minutes after going outside the sanctuary to connect with others worshipping with you, especially people you may not know as well.

Hearing Assisted Devices – **Speak with an usher** if you would like to use these devices that work with or without a hearing aid. These devices are specifically designed to work only with our sound system. Please remember to return the device at the close of the service. Thank you!

Building Accessibility – Our building includes an exterior ramp on Newbury Street and an elevator (in the Parish House part of the building) which allows access to the fellowship hall, meeting rooms, offices, and other parts of the building. We also have accessible restrooms. Please ask an usher to help you locate these resources.



Church of the Covenant
Boston Massachusetts

67 Newbury St., Boston MA 02116 | (617) 266-7480 | www.cotcbos.org

Worship at Church of the Covenant is the heart and soul of our life together as a community of faith. Since 1932 we have been a federated church, maintaining membership in the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church (USA) and welcoming pilgrims from all traditions to our life and work. Through our prayer and praise, in our concerns and celebrations, by word and sacrament, art and silence, we seek empowerment, together and individually, as a covenant people, for the work of Christ.

Jesus taught that the Spirit invites all people, including society's marginalized, to enjoy seats at God's table. This congregation seeks to demonstrate that vision by welcoming individuals and families without regard to race, gender identity, age, physical/mental condition, or sexual orientation. We rejoice in the presence of children among us as integral to our community. We maintain vital ties of faith with the Church of the Poor in the community of the Sweet Name of Jesus, in Northwestern Nicaragua.

We believe God's blessings are found in marriage equality for all. Thus, we joyfully welcome the opportunity afforded us by our Commonwealth and both denominations to join couples of any sexual orientation in fully legal and holy marriage.

Covenant's sanctuary resides on the ancestral and unceded lands and waterways of the Massachusetts people. We lament the pain of displacement, honor the ongoing work of repair, and give thanks for all past, present and future stewards of this sacred place.

In our worship we use language and imagery that reflect the wonderful diversity of the image of God in humanity and all of creation; that transcend the exclusive language of the church's past. And as stewards, we seek to live into the Spirit's blessing as we move in solidarity on this shared and sacred, common home we call earth. We invite you to join us in the journey toward God's justice and peace for all of Boston and beyond!

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Rob Mark, *Lead Pastor*

Rev. Joshua Lawrence Lazard, *Associate Pastor*

Thomas Handel, *Minister of Music*

Bill Brown, *Building Manager*

Rev. Kate Carlisle, *CYCE Coordinator*

Nancy Stockford, *Parish Administrator/Financial Secretary*

Jesús Vargas, *Sexton*

Alan Lane, *Food Cupboard Coordinator*

Venkatesh Balasubramanian, *Digital Communications & Audio Visual Tech Manager*

CHURCH OFFICERS

Kathryn Barry, *President of the Corporation*

Trudi Veldman, *Clerk of the Council*

Jon Schwarz, *Moderator of the Board of Deacons*

Faith Perry, *Treasurer*